

## **Notice of Service of Process**

null / ALL er: 23419053

Transmittal Number: 23419053 Date Processed: 06/30/2021

Primary Contact: Tanya Flores

Midland Credit Management, Inc.

350 Camino de La Reina

Ste 100

San Diego, CA 92108-3007

Electronic copy provided to: Krista Yerby

Entity: Midland Credit Management, Inc

Entity ID Number 1682419

Entity Served: Midland Credit Management, Inc.

Title of Action: Lateiya Starr vs. Midland Credit Management, Inc.

Matter Name/ID: Lateiya Starr vs. Midland Credit Management, Inc. (11359270)

Document(s) Type: Notice and Complaint

Nature of Action: Violation of State/Federal Act

Court/Agency: Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas, PA

Case/Reference No: AR-21-002711

Jurisdiction Served:

Date Served on CSC:

O6/28/2021

Answer or Appearance Due:

Originally Served On:

CSC

How Served: Certified Mail

Sender Information: Emily S. Gomez-Hayes

412-378-5854

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To avoid potential delay, please do not send your response to CSC

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# The Law Office of Emily Gomez, LLC

2011 Noble Street Suite 201 Pittsburgh, PA 15218 Tel: (412) 378-5854 Fax: (412) 357-1564 Emaíl: esg@egomezlaw.com

June 25, 2021

Midland Credit Management, Inc. c/o Corporation Service Company 251 Little Falls Drive Wilmington, DE 19808

Re: Starr v. Midland Credit Management, Inc., AR-21-002711

Dear Sir or Madam,

Pursuant to Pa.R.C.P. 403, please find enclosed a copy of the Plaintiff's Complaint filed on June 25, 2021 in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. The above-captioned matter is currently scheduled for an arbitration hearing in Pittsburgh on October 20, 2021 in Room 702 of the City-County Building, which is located at 414 Grant Street, Pittsburgh PA 15219. Service of this Complaint is effective upon receipt.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at (412) 378-5854, or by email at esg@egomezlaw.com.

Sincerely Yours,

Emily S Gomez-Hayes Esq.

# Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas Event Notification: AR-21-002742

From: webmaster.pro@county.allegheny.pa.us <WEBMASTER.PRO@COUNTY.ALLEGHENY.PA.US>

To: Emily Gomez <ESG@EGOMEZLAW.COM>

Date: Friday, June 25th, 2021 at 3:45 PM

A Arbitration Hearing has been scheduled for AR-21-002742 - Starr vs Midland Credit Management Inc. at Room 702, City-County Building on 10/20/2021 at 9:00

Confidentiality Notice: This e-mail message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. Any unauthorized review, use, disclosure, forwarding, or distribution is prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply e-mail and destroy all copies of the original message.

### IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

LATEIYA STARR,

CIVIL DIVISION

Plaintiff,

CASE NO. AR-21-\_\_\_\_

VS.

MIDLAND CREDIT MANAGEMENT,

INC.,

**COMPLAINT** 

Defendant.

Filed on Behalf of Plaintiff,

Lateiya Starr

Counsel of Record for this Party:

EMILY S. GOMEZ-HAYES, ESQ.

PA I.D.# 206926

LAW OFFICE OF EMILY GOMEZ, LLC

2011 Noble Street, Suite 201

Pittsburgh, PA 15218 Tel: 412-378-5854 Fax: 412-357-1564 esg@egomezlaw.com

Jury Trial Demanded Upon Removal or Appeal

## IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

LATEIYA STARR,			
Plaintiff,	CIVIL DIVISION		
vs.	CASE NO. AR-21		
MIDLAND CREDIT MANAGEMENT, INC.,			
Defendant.	·		

#### NOTICE TO DEFEND

YOU HAVE BEEN SUED IN COURT. If you wish to defend against the claims set forth in the following pages, you must take action within TWENTY (20) days after this complaint and notice are served, by entering a written appearance personally or by attorney and filing in writing with the court your defenses or objections to the claims set forth against you. You are warned that if you fail to do so, the case may proceed without you and a judgment may be entered against you by the court without further notice for any money claimed in the complaint or for any claim or relief requested by the plaintiff. You may lose money or property or other rights important to you.

YOU SHOULD TAKE THIS PAPER TO YOUR LAWYER AT ONCE. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A LAWYER OR CANNOT AFFORD ONE, GO TO OR TELEPHONE THE OFFICE SET FORTH BELOW. THIS OFFICE CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION ABOUT HIRING A LAWYER.

IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO HIRE A LAWYER, THIS OFFICE MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE YOU WITH INFORMATION ABOUT AGENCIES THAT MAY OFFER LEGAL SERVICES TO ELIGIBLE PERSON AT A REDUCED FEE OR NO FEE.

LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE
The Allegheny County Bar Association
11th Floor Koppers Building
436 Seventh Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219
Telephone: (412) 261-5555

#### **HEARING NOTICE**

YOU HAVE BEEN SUED IN COURT. The above Notice to Defendant explains what				
you must do to dispute the claims made against you. If you file the written response referred to				
in the Notice to Defendant, a hearing before a board of arbitrators will take place in the				
Compulsory Arbitration Center. Report to the Arbitration Assembly Room, Courtroom Two,				
Seventh Floor City-County Building, 416 Grant Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219, on				
, at 9:00 a.m. IF YOU FAIL TO FILE THE RESPONSE DESCRIBED				
IN THE NOTICE TO DEFEND, A JUDGMENT FOR THE AMOUNT CLAIMED IN				
THE COMPLAINT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST YOU BEFORE THE HEARING.				
BY THE COURT:				

#### **DUTY TO APPEAR AT ARBITRATION HEARING**

If one or more of the parties is not present at the hearing, THE MATTER MAY BE HEARD AT THE SAME TIME AND DATE BEFORE A JUDGE OF THE COURT WITHOUT THE ABSENT PARTY OR PARTIES. THERE IS NO RIGHT TO A TRIAL DE NOVO ON APPEAL FROM A DECISION ENTERED BY A JUDGE.

NOTICE: You must respond to this complaint within twenty (20) days or a judgment for the amount claimed may be entered against you before the hearing.

If one or more of the parties is not present at the hearing, the matter may be heard immediately before a judge without the absent party or parties. There is no right to a trial de novo on appeal from a decision entered by a judge.

#### IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

LATEIYA STARR,			
Plaintiff,	CIVIL DIVISION		
vs.	CASE NO. AR-21		
MIDLAND CREDIT MANAGEMENT, INC.,			
Defendant.			

#### **COMPLAINT**

AND NOW comes the Plaintiff, Lateiya Starr, by and through her attorneys, Emily Gomez-Hayes and the Law Office of Emily Gomez LLC, and makes the following Complaint, asserting violations of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1692 et. seq. ("FDCPA"). In support thereof, she states as follows:

#### **PARTIES**

- 1. Plaintiff Lateiya Starr ("Plaintiff"), is a natural person and resident of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Ms. Starr is a "consumer" as defined by § 1692a(3) of the FDCPA. Prior to 2021, Plaintiff allegedly incurred a financial obligation primarily for personal, family, or household purposes a "debt" as defined by § 1692a(5) of the FDCPA.
- 2. Defendant Midland Credit Management, Inc. ("MCM" or "Defendant") is a Kansas corporation with a principal place of business in San Diego, CA. MCM's primary business is the collection of charged-off consumer debt on behalf of original creditors and debt purchasers.
- 3. In the ordinary course of business, MCM utilizes the mails and telephone in an effort to collect charged-off debt from consumers in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Defendant is a "debt collector" as defined by § 1692(a)(6) of the FDCPA.

#### **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

- 4. On or about April 14, 2021, Defendant caused a letter (the "April Letter") to be sent to Attorney Gregory Artim of Artim Law, LLC on behalf of Plaintiff. Exhibit A.
- 5. The April Letter advised Attorney Artim that Defendant believed its records with respect to a Credit Account ending in 5853 were accurate. Id.
  - 6. Attorney Artim had no idea what Defendant was talking about.
- 7. With an alleged balance of \$861.64 purportedly due and owing, the Credit Account ending in 5853 pertained to a former credit account of Plaintiff's, which had been an Amazon credit card originated by Synchrony Bank. <u>Id</u>.
- 8. While Attorney Artim had represented Plaintiff in two unrelated legal disputes with MCM back in the years 2016 and 2017, the accounts at issue in those matters had alleged balances of \$1,032.80 and \$805.77, and had been originated by Credit One Bank, not Synchrony Bank. Exhibit B.
- 9. At no time did Attorney Artim represent Plaintiff with respect to the Credit Account ending in 5853.
- 10. With respect to the Credit Account ending in 5853, Attorney Artim was a third party and perfect stranger.
- 11. As a result, Attorney Artim did not have Plaintiff's permission to view the private financial information contained in the April Letter.
- 12. Following his receipt of the April Letter, Attorney Artim informed Plaintiff that he had received unsolicited, private financial information of hers in connection with a credit account that she had not retained him to handle.

- 13. Upon receiving the April Letter, Plaintiff became extremely upset and anxious, and worried that the security of any financial information of hers in MCM's possession was at risk.
- 14. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's conduct, Plaintiff has experienced significantly increased anxiety, which has made it difficult to concentrate at work.
- 15. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's conduct, Plaintiff has suffered from anxiety, embarrassment, stress, and lost sleep.

#### Count I - FDCPA

- 16. The preceding paragraphs are incorporated herein by reference.
- 17. The foregoing acts and omissions of Defendant constituted (1) improper communication to third parties, and (2) unfair practices in violation of 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692c and 1692f of the FDCPA.

#### Communication with Third Parties: § 1692c

18. In relevant part, § 1692c(b) requires that, inter alia:

"[w]ithout the prior consent of the consumer given directly to the debt collector, or the express permission of a court of competent jurisdiction, or as reasonably necessary to effectuate a postjudgment judicial remedy, a debt collector may not communicate, in connection with the collection of a debt, with any person other than the consumer, his attorney, a consumer reporting agency if otherwise permitted by law, the creditor, the attorney of the creditor, or the attorney of the debt collector."

15 U.S.C. § 1692c(b).

- 19. In the instant matter, Defendant's actions violated § 1692c(b) because it disseminated private financial information of Plaintiff to a third party without Plaintiff's consent.
- 20. While § 1692c(b) provides for communications to a consumer's attorney, Plaintiff had no attorney with respect to the Credit Account ending in 5853.
  - 21. Defendant's sending of the April Letter to Attorney Artim therefore violated § 1692c(b).

22. As a result of Defendant's actions, Plaintiff has suffered such harm as has previously been stated herein.

#### Unfair or Unconscionable Means: § 1692f

23. In relevant part, § 1692f prohibits debt collectors from engaging in any:

"[u]nfair or unconscionable means to collect or attempt to collect a debt."

15 U.S.C. § 1692f.

24. Black's Law Dictionary defines unconscionable as:

"[S]howing no regard for conscience; affronting the sense of sense of justice, decency, or reasonableness."

Black's Law Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> Pocket Ed. 2001.

- 25. In the instant matter Defendant's actions constituted unconscionable conduct in violation of §1692f, because disclosing a person's private financial information to third parties without consent offends any objective person's sense of justice, decency, and reasonableness.
- 26. As a result of Defendant's actions, Plaintiff has suffered such harm as has previously been stated herein.
- 27. Due to the foregoing violations of 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692c and 1692f, Plaintiff is entitled to actual damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1692k(a)(1); statutory damages in an amount of up to \$1000.00 pursuant to § 1692k(a)(2)(A); and reasonable attorneys' fees and costs pursuant to § 1692k(a)(3).

#### Count II - FCEUA

28. The preceding paragraphs are incorporated herein by reference.

- 29. The foregoing acts and omissions of Defendant MCM constituted violations of 73 P.S. § 2270.4(a) of the FCEUA, based on Defendant's violations of 15 U.S.C. §§ 1692c and 1692f of the FDCPA.
- 30. Violations of the FCEUA in turn constitute <u>per se</u> violations of the Unfair Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law ("UTPCPL"), pursuant to 73 P.S. § 2270.5(a).
- 31. As a result of these violations, Plaintiff is entitled to up to three times her damages, costs, and attorneys' fees pursuant to 73 P.S. § 201-9.2 of the UTPCPL.

#### REQUEST FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff Lateiya Starr respectfully requests that this Court:

- A. Declare that the Defendant's actions violated the FDCPA and the FCEUA;
- B. Enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff for actual and statutory damages, costs, and reasonable attorneys' fees as provided by § 1692k of the FDCPA and § 201-9.2 of the UTPCPL; and
- C. Grant any further relief as deemed just.

#### **JURY DEMAND**

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury upon removal or appeal.

#### **ARBITRATION LIMITS**

This matter is filed within the court's Arbitration Limits.

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Respectfully submitted.

LAW OFFICE OF EMILY GOMEZ, LLC

Emily S. Gomez-Mayes Esq. PA I.D. #206926

2011 Noble Street, Suite 201

Pittsburgh, PA 15218 Tel: 412-378-5854 Fax: 412-357-1564

esg'ü egomezlav.com

Counsel for Plaintiff Lateiya Starr

## **VERIFICATION**

I, Lateiya Starr, have read the foregoing Complaint, and affirm that the facts asserted therein are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief. This verification is made subject to the penalties of 18 Pa.C.S. § 4904, relating to unsworn falsification to authorities.

6/24/2021 Date

Lateiya Starr

# **EXHIBIT A**



Midland 350 Camino De La Reina Credit Suito100 Management San Diego, CA 92108 Phone (877) 231-8885 Hours of Operation Mon-Fri: 5am-4:30pm PT;

CC8

Latelya Starr C/O Morgan Drexen 1751 Lincoln Hwy North Versailles, PA 15137-2558 Original Creditor
Original Account Number
MCM Account Number
Current Owner
Current Balance

Synchrony Bank 6045781061025853 8573850633 Midland Funding LLC \$861.64

05-07-2021

RE: Synchrony Bank Amazon

Dear Latelya,

We have received and processed your dispute. After reviewing the information you provided, our account notes, and information provided by the previous creditor we have found that our information is correct. We have also enclosed documents regarding the account. If you believe we have reached this conclusion in error, please reference the information below:

You have indicated that the following item(s) pertain to your account:	In order for us to further investigate your inquiry please provide the following documentation:
We are uncertain of what you are specifically disputing	Written explanation and documentation demonstrating any errors in our account information

Information can be mailed to: Attention: Consumer Support Services, 320 E Big Beaver Rd. Suite 300, Troy, MI 48083

In response to your dispute, we have requested that the three major credit bureaus change the status of this account to "Disputed". Your credit report will not be updated if the federal reporting period has expired.

For additional information on credit reporting and tradeline statuses, please visit the following website: https://www.MidlandCredit.com/help-center/assistance-faqs/

Please call Consumer Support Services at (877) 231-8885 if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Tim Bolin

Tim Bolin, Division Manager

The law limits how long you can be sued on a debt. Because of the age of your debt, we will not sue you for it. If you do not pay the debt, we may continue to report it to the credit reporting agencies as unpaid.



#### Important Disclosure Information:

Please understand this is a communication from a debt collector. This is an attempt to collect a debt. Any information obtained will be used for that purpose.

		and/or from this com			
Orlginal Creditor	Synchrony Bank		MCM Account Number		8573850633
Original Account Number	6045781061025853		Charge-Off Date		11-15-2015
Current Creditor The sole owner of this debt	Midland Funding LLC		Current Servicer		Midland Credit Management, Inc.
Send Payments to:  Midland Credit Management, Inc. P.O. Box 51319 Los Angeles, CA 90051-5619  Send disputes or an ins full satisfaction of a del Attn: Consumer Suppor 320 East Big Beaver Rd Suite 300 Troy, MI 48083 You may also call: (877)		trument tendered as ot to: rt Services	Col 869 We	vsical Payments for Colorado Residents: orado Manager, Inc. 90 Wolff Court, Suite 110 estminster, CO 80031 one (303) 920-4763	

We are required under state law to notify consumers of the following additional rights. This list does not contain a complete list of the rights consumers have under applicable law:

#### NMLS ID: 934164

IF YOU LIVE IN MASSACHUSETTS, THIS APPLIES TO YOU: NOTICE OF IMPORTANT RIGHTS: You have the right to make a written or oral request that telephone calls regarding your debt not be made to you at your place of employment. Any such oral request will be valid for only ten (10) days unless you provide written confirmation of the request postmarked or delivered within seven (7) days of such request. You may terminate this request by writing to MCM.

IF YOU LIVE IN MINNESOTA, THIS APPLIES TO YOU: This collection agency is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Commerce.

IF YOU LIVE IN NEW YORK CITY, THIS APPLIES TO YOU: New York City Department of Consumer Affairs License Number 1140603, 1207829, 1207820, 1227728, 2022587, 2023151, 2023152, 2027429, 2027430, 2027431 and 2058507.

IF YOU LIVE IN NORTH CAROLINA, THIS APPLIES TO YOU: North Carolina Department of Insurance Permit #101659, #4182, #4250, #3777, #111895, #112039, #113170, #113236 and #112678. Midland Credit Management, Inc. 320 E Big Beaver Rd. Suite 300, Troy, MI 48083

IF YOU LIVE IN TENNESSEE, THIS APPLIES TO YOU: This collection agency is licensed by the Collection Service Board of the Department of Commerce and Insurance.

# **EXHIBIT B**

#### Magisterial District Judge 36-3-01 DOCKET Docket Number: MJ-36301-CV-0000128-2016 Civil Docket MIDLAND FUNDING LLC Lateiya Starr CASE INFORMATION 11/03/2016 Judge Assigned: Magisterial District Judge Dale F. File Date: Nicholson \$1,032.80 Closed Claim Amount: Case Status: Beaver Judgment Amount: County: CALENDAR EVENTS Case Calendar Schedule Schedule Start Time Room Judge Name Event Type Start Date <u>Status</u> Civil Action Hearing 12/06/2016 11:00 am Cancelled Magisterial District Judge Dale F. Nicholson CASE PARTICIPANTS <u>Participant Type</u> <u>Participant Name</u> <u>Address</u> New Brighton, PA 15066 Defendant Starr, Lateiya Eatontown, NJ 07724 Plaintiff MIDLAND FUNDING LLC DISPOSITION SUMMARY Defendant Docket Number Plaintiff Disposition MIDLAND FUNDING LLC Lateiya Starr 11/18/2016 MJ-36301-CV-0000128-2016 Withdrawn ATTORNEY INFORMATION Private Name: Gregory Thomas Artim, Esq. Representing: Starr, Lateiya Counsel Status: Active - Entry of Appearance Supreme Court No.: 080886 Phone No.: 412-823-8003 Address: Morrow And Artim Pc 1751 Lincoln Hwy North Versailles, PA 15137-2558 Entry of Appearance Filed Dt: 11/15/2016 Withdrawal of Entry of Appearance Filed Dt: Applies To DOCKET ENTRY INFORMATION Filed Date Entry Magisterial District Court 36-3-01 11/18/2016 Withdrawn Lateiya Starr, Defendant 11/15/2016 Entry of Appearance Filed Gregory Thomas Artim, Esq. Lateiya Starr, Defendant Lateiya Starr Lateiya Starr, Defendant 11/07/2016 Intent to Defend Filed

MDJS 1200 Printed: 05/18/2021 9:32 am

MIDLAND FUNDING LLC

11/03/2016

Civil Complaint Filed

Recent entries made in the court filing offices may not be immediately reflected on these docket sheets. Neither the courts of the Unified Judicial System of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania nor the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts assumes any liability for inaccurate or delayed data, errors or omissions on these docket sheets. You should verify that the information is accurate and current by personally consulting the official record reposing in the court wherein the record is maintained.

#### Magisterial District Judge 36-3-01 DOCKET Docket Number: MJ-36301-CV-0000029-2017 **Civil Docket** Midland Funding LLC Lateiya Starr Page 1 of 2 CASE INFORMATION Magisterial District Judge Dale F. Judge Assigned: File Date: 02/28/2017 Nicholson \$805.77 Closed Claim Amount: Case Status: Judgment Amount: Beaver County: CALENDAR EVENTS Schedule Event Type Start Time Start Date Room Judge Name Status 5 4 1 Civil Action Hearing 04/05/2017 10:00 am Magisterial District Judge Dale Cancelled F. Nicholson CASE PARTICIPANTS Participant Type Participant Name Defendant Starr, Lateiya Plaintiff Midland Funding LLC Address New Brighton, PA 15066 Eatontown, NJ 07724 DISPOSITION SUMMARY <u>Defendant</u> <u>Disposition</u> Lateiya Starr Withdrawn <u>Plaintiff</u> Docket Number MJ-36301-CV-0000029-2017 Midland Funding LLC 03/21/2017 ATTORNEY INFORMATION Private Name: Gregory Thomas Artim, Esq. Representing: Starr, Lateiya Counsel Status: Active - Entry of Appearance Supreme Court No.: 080886 Phone No.: 412-823-8003 Address: Morrow And Artim Pc 1751 Lincoln Hwy North Versailles, PA 15137-2558 Entry of Appearance Filed Dt: 03/16/2017 Withdrawal of Entry of Appearance Filed Dt: Applies To DOCKET ENTRY INFORMATION Filed Date Entry 03/21/2017 Magisterial District Court 36-3-01 Withdrawn Lateiya Starr, Defendant 03/16/2017 Gregory Thomas Artim, Esq. Lateiya Starr, Defendant Entry of Appearance Filed Intent to Defend Filed Lateiya Starr, Defendant 03/10/2017 Lateiya Starr 02/28/2017 Civil Complaint Filed Midland Funding LLC

MDJS 1200 Printed: 05/18/2021 9:32 am

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Law Office of Emily Gomez, LLC

2011 Noble Street, Suite 201 Pittsburgh, PA 15218 Case 2:21-cv-01003-RJC Document 1-2 Filed 07/28/21 Page 20 of 20



7020 0640 0002 0172 3062





U.S. POSTAGE PAIL FCM LG ENV PITTSBURGH, PA 15218 JUN 25, 21 AMOUNT

\$8.05

Midland Credit Management, Inc. c/o Corporation Service Co. 251 Little Falls Drive Wilmington, DE 19808